Handing over UNI to private media group

934.SHRI MOINUL HASSAN: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) what are the factors that led to the present financial condition of the UNI and handing it over to a private media group;

(b) whether Government are considering to assume this power and intervene and come out with an acceptable solution since there is no independent regulatory agency for overseeing this area; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) to (c) Ministry of Information and Broadcasting exercises no control over the Print Media. United News of India (UNI) is a media company registered under the Companies Act, 1956. Its affairs are governed by the shareholders through their representatives on the Board of Directors.

FM Radios in India

935. SHRI THENNALA G. BALAKRISHNA PILLAI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of FM Radio's operating in India currently; and

(b) the total annual income calculated thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) and (b) At present 161 All India Radio FM transmitters at 152 places are operating in India and total annual income of Rs. 33.25 crores was received during 2005-06 from these FM transmitters.

Under the Scheme Private Radio FM (Phase II), letters of Intent were issued to different companies for operationalisation of 245 channels. 41 private FM channels are currently inoperation including the 21 channels operationalised in Phase I. While an amount of 10.67 crores was received for the year 2005-06 as annual license fee from 21 operationalised channels, the annual income expected from 41 currently ope.rationalis.ed